

NC State School of Social Work

HRSA BHWET Scholars Program

What is HRSA?

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is a federal agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. HRSA funds programs for medically underserved and/or vulnerable populations, and supports the training of health professionals, including clinical social workers. HRSA includes several bureaus and offices, including the Bureau of Workforce Development and Office of Rural Health. To learn more, visit their website: www.hrsa.gov

What is BHWET?

The Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program (BHWET) is a HRSA-funded initiative that focuses on developing and expanding the behavioral health workforce to serve our communities, and particularly those in rural and medically underserved areas. The specific goals of the BHWET program are to: (1) Increase the number of clinically prepared social workers; (2) Increase the number of racial/ethnic minorities in clinical social work; and (3) Increase the number of clinical social workers that work in medically underserved areas and with medically underserved populations.

What is the NC State School of Social Work's HRSA BHWET Scholars Program?

With funding from a HRSA BHWET grant, we have developed the HRSA BHWET Scholars Program. Each year, we select students in their final year of the MSW program to serve as HRSA BHWET Scholars. HRSA BHWET Scholars receive a \$10,000 stipend that is paid in 10 monthly installments (August – May) of \$1000. This money is NOT a scholarship or loan, but is payment in exchange for specific activities, commitments, and behaviors. Specifically, if you are selected and agree to become a HRSA BHWET Scholar, the following are required as conditions of your participation:

1. Must have full-time student enrollment during the academic year of funding
2. Must be a graduate student in good academic standing
3. Must be in final year of MSW program and be eligible to graduate during the academic year of funding.
4. Must attend and participate in mandatory HRSA BHWET workshops, conferences, and educational events
5. Must be enrolled in an approved practicum throughout the academic year and complete required hours
6. Must be a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States
7. Must enroll in direct deposit through "Student Self Service" via the MyPack Portal
8. Must submit demographic information to the HRSA BHWET Evaluator.
9. Must respond to surveys sent by the HRSA BHWET Evaluator during the academic year and 3 years post-graduation.
10. Must provide post-graduation contact information.
11. Must commit to working with medically underserved populations upon graduation.

How Does the NC State School of Social Work HRSA BHWET Scholars Program Work?

- All selected HRSA BHWET Scholars complete practicums at HRSA-eligible placement sites where they provide behavioral health services
- All selected HRSA BHWET Scholars will be placed in the same field seminar class (typically held on Tuesday mornings)
- At the beginning of each semester, HRSA BHWET Scholars will be provided with a Workshop Training Schedule that outlines the mandatory trainings Scholars are required to attend. These workshops are typically held on Monday and Tuesday mornings (although there are exceptions) and occur approximately 2-3 times per month. These workshops focus on further developing Scholars' clinical skills and cover a range of topics.
- Scholars are also provided with other optional training opportunities and resources throughout the year.
- HRSA BHWET Scholars are required to complete periodic evaluations of workshops and the program as a whole. In addition, BHWET Scholars complete a demographic questionnaire, provide post-graduation contact information, and complete an annual survey for three years following graduation.
- It is important to recognize that being a HRSA Scholar requires additional work and time commitments. Workshops are in-person and HRSA Scholars are expected to attend all of them as a condition of the program.

Who is Eligible to become a HRSA BHWET Scholar?

- Traditional 2-year MSW students entering their final year of the program AND advanced standing MSW students
- Students who are in good academic standing and taking a fulltime course load
- Students with a genuine interest in behavioral health who have a commitment to working with underserved and rural populations after graduation.

Who is NOT Eligible to become a HRSA BHWET Scholar?

1. MSW students who do not expect to graduate in spring 2025.
2. Students in non-behavioral health-related practicum placements
3. Students who receive NC State graduate school funding, including scholarships, grants, or fellowships. For example, Graduate Research Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants who receive tuition reimbursement cannot be HRSA BHWET Scholars.
4. Students who have previously received HRSA funding through another program.
5. Students who receive other federal funding from HRSA or any other department of the federal government. However, please note this does NOT include Veteran's benefits or financial aid.
6. Student who are not citizens, national, or permanent residents of the United States

HRSA BHWET Scholar Selection Process

- Selection for the program is based on a variety of factors, including your commitment to pursuing behavioral health with underserved and marginalized populations, HRSA federal preferences/guidelines, and your interest and application materials.
- Selection is highly contingent on your practicum placement type (i.e., behavioral health) and location. Regarding location, a goal of the HRSA BHWET program is to increase the number of providers working in medically underserved areas (MUA/MUPs), in mental health or primary care health professional shortage areas (HPSAs), and rural areas. Whether an agency is in a HPSA or MUA/MUP, and/or is considered rural is determined by the agency's address. You can explore whether your practicum agency is in a MUA/MUP or HPSA by going to this website and entering the agency's address: <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area/by-address>. You can explore whether your practicum agency is considered rural by going to this website and entering the agency's address: <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/rural-health>
- The focus of this grant cycle is on preparing students to provide trauma-focused treatment to youth and young adults. Consequently, *priority preference* will be given to students whose practicum is in a HPSA, MUA/MUP, and/or rural location and involves providing behavioral health services to children and/or young adults through age 25. *Preference* will be given to students whose practicum agency is in a HPSA, MUP/MUA, and/or rural location and is in a criminal justice setting (including prisons), involves working primarily with low-income clients, involves violence prevention, and/or is in an integrated healthcare setting.
- This should not be something you do solely because you need the stipend. Although the money may be a partial motivator, we are seeking students who are genuinely interested in pursuing clinical work with underserved and marginalized populations both during and after their MSW education. We are also particularly interested in students who want to work with youth and young adults.
- Please note that we expect to receive over 75 applications for only 29 slots. There will be far more interest in the program than the number of slots we have. We wish we could fund every interested student.

Application Information and Process

- If you are interested in applying to become a HRSA BHWET Scholar, you are encouraged to attend a HRSA BHWET Scholar Information Session. There will be several information sessions in February, March, and April.
- When you meet with Dr. Francis, our Director of Practicum Education, to discuss your practicum for AY24-25, please let her know that you are interested in applying to become a HRSA BHWET Scholar. This way, Dr. Francis can speak with you about eligible placements. However, please note that obtaining a clinical placement in a MUA/MUP, HPSA, and/or rural area does not automatically mean you will be selected.

- The application portal will open in April 2024. An email will go out to all newly admitted advanced standing students who have confirmed they will be attending NC State and to all first year MSW students. The application link will also be available on the HRSA BHWET website.
- Please the application AFTER you know your practicum placement for AY24-25. On this application, you will identify your practicum placement and look up whether the agency is in a HPSA, MUA/MUP, and/or rural area. In addition, there are questions on the application to help establish your eligibility for the program and other questions that ask you to describe why you want to be a HRSA Scholar, what you hope to get out of the program, and your career plans and goals.
- In May 2024, screening of applications will begin, and a portion of applicants will be contacted via email to schedule a HRSA BHWET Scholars interview.
- Selected HRSA BHWET Scholars will be notified of their acceptance by July 31, 2024, and asked to complete a Letter of Commitment to indicate they wish to participate in the program.

Please contact hrsa_grants@ncsu.edu if you have questions or need additional information.